

**Informational Webinar:**  
**Energy Frontier Research Centers (EFRCs)**  
**Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)**

DE-FOA-0003614

Energy Frontier Leadership Team  
Office of Basic Energy Sciences  
March 9, 2026

NOFO Issue Date	February 18, 2026
Submission Deadline for Pre-Applications	April 1, 2026 at 5:00PM Eastern Time A Pre-Application is required
Pre-Application Response Date	May 6, 2026
Submission Deadline for Applications	July 1, 2026 at 11:59PM Eastern Time



**U.S. DEPARTMENT**  
*of* **ENERGY**

**Office of**  
**Science**

**Disclaimer:** This presentation summarizes the contents of the NOFO. Nothing in this webinar is intended to add to, take away from, or contradict any of the requirements of the NOFO. If there are any inconsistencies between the NOFO and this presentation or statements from DOE personnel, the NOFO is the controlling document.

# Questions & Answers

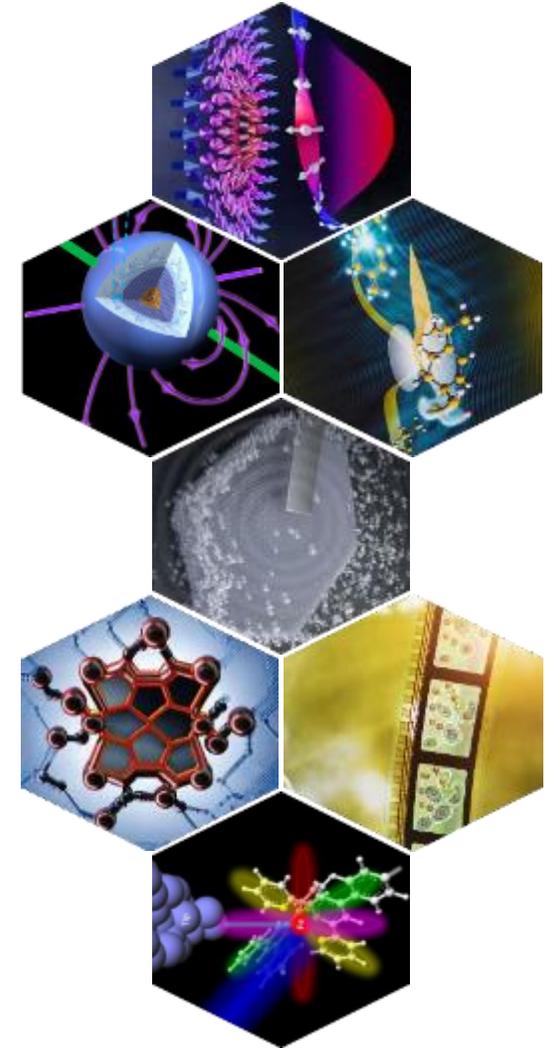
- Please submit questions using Zoom Q&A window, which should be accessible at the bottom of your zoom window
- If your question is not answered today, or you have additional questions, please submit via [EFRC@science.doe.gov](mailto:EFRC@science.doe.gov)
- We will post video and slides on the Funding Opportunities website

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# Basic Energy Sciences: Understanding Matter and Energy at Electronic, Atomic, and Molecular Levels

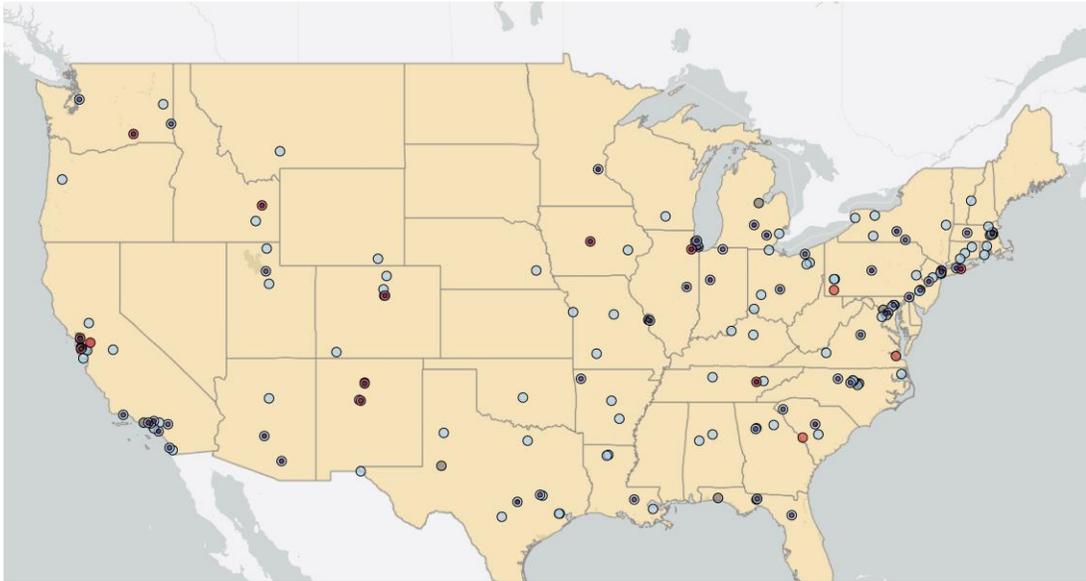
BES fulfills its mission through:

- Supporting **basic research in Chemical Sciences, Materials Sciences, Geosciences, and Biosciences**
  - “Grand Challenge” science
  - Discovery and design of materials and chemical processes that underpin a broad range of energy technologies
- Operating **world-class scientific user facilities** in X-ray, neutron, and nanoscale science
- Managing **construction and upgrade projects** to maintain **world-leading** scientific user facilities
- Ensuring **broad participation** in the research portfolio and user communities



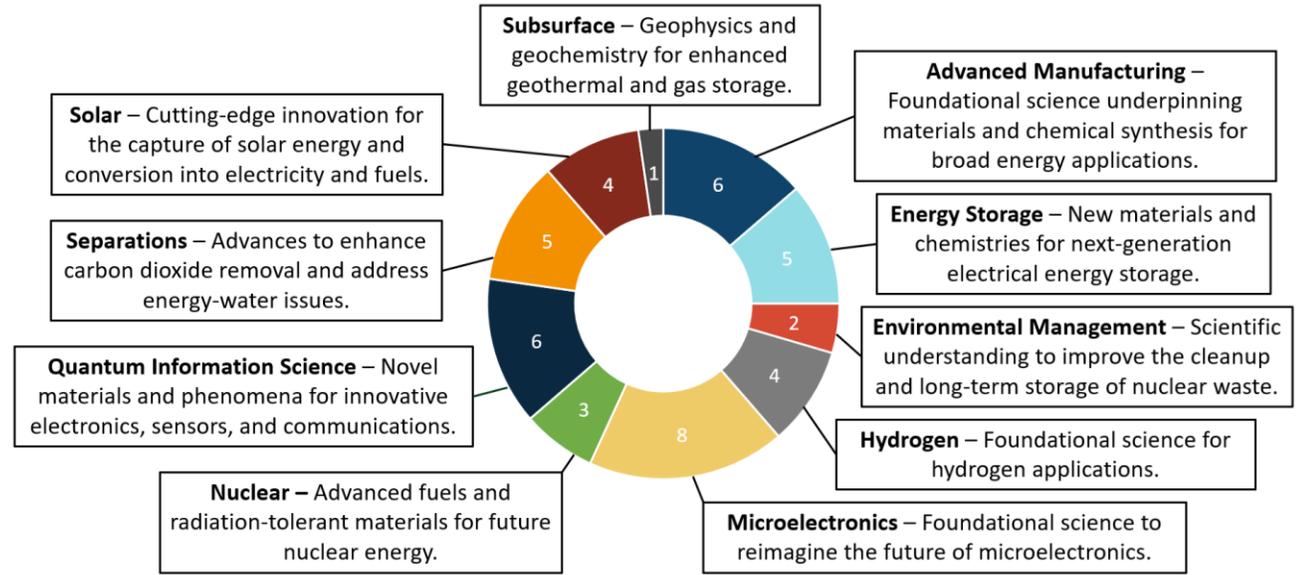
# Energy Frontier Research Centers (EFRCs) Support National Priorities

107 EFRCs Since 2009



>190 institutions in 43 states + D.C.     ~ 1,820 senior investigators  
 >10,000 early career and technical staff

Currently 44 EFRCs



- Couples “**basic research needs**” for energy applications and “**grand-challenge science**”.
- Brings together the academic community and the national labs to accelerate **scientific productivity and world leadership**.

# Energy Frontier Research Center FY 2026 NOFO: Scientific Scope (See Sec. III of the NOFO)

- Applications from multi-disciplinary teams are required to propose both **discovery science** and **use-inspired basic research**.
- There are two categories of topics: BES Reports Topics, and Special Topics.
- For the BES Reports topic, see Sec. III of the NOFO for links to the workshop and roundtable reports and which Priority Research Directions (PRD) or Priority Research Opportunities (PRO) should be addressed. The BES Reports can be found on <https://science.osti.gov/bes/Community-Resources/Reports>.
- Specific requirements for the Special Topics are listed in Sec. III of the NOFO. Some reference BES Reports. However, eligibility is based on the special topic requirements; not all research areas within the BES reports are within scope.

# BES Report Topics

- The **BES Reports Topics** refer to the following BES workshop and roundtable reports:
  - Foundational Science to Accelerate Nuclear Energy (**New** and **Renewal**, all PROs\*)
  - Controlling Subsurface Fractures and Fluid Flow: A Basic Research Agenda (**New** and **Renewal**, all PRDs\*\*)
  - Basic Research Needs for Next Generation Electrical Energy Storage (**New**, only PRD 2 and 3; **Renewals**, all PRDs)
  - Basic Research Needs for Transformative Manufacturing (**New** and **Renewal**, only PRD1 and PD5)
  - Basic Research Needs for Microelectronics (**New** and **Renewal**, all PRDs)
  - BES Roundtable on Opportunities for Quantum Computing in Chemical and Materials Sciences (**New** and **Renewal**, all PROs)
  - BES Roundtable on Opportunities for Basic Research for Next-Generation Quantum Systems (**New** and **Renewal**, only PROs 2 and 3)

*\*PRO: Priority Research Opportunity*

*\*\*PRD: Priority Research Direction*



# Special Topics

- The **Special Topics** are:
  - Controlling Quantum Phenomena to Enable Unconventional Computing Paradigms
  - Development and Workflow Integration of AI/ML Models for Materials and Chemistry Discovery Science
  - Emergent Phenomena of Complex Chemical Systems
  - Fundamental Science for Critical Minerals and Materials

# Energy Frontier Research Center FY 2026 NOFO: Key Elements

- NOFO solicits both new and renewal applications
- Eligible Applicants: All types of domestic entities, including for example, universities/colleges, non-profit organizations, for profit organizations, DOE National Laboratories (see Sec. II of the NOFO)
  - Other Federal agencies or FFRDCs may participate as partners (not lead institution)
  - Non-domestic organizations may participate as partners (not lead institution), but you must justify why the capability is not available domestically.
- All applications are expected to involve multi-disciplinary research teams; multi-institutional applications are encouraged
- DOE anticipates awarding grants, interagency agreements, and National Laboratory authorizations under this NOFO

# Energy Frontier Research Center FY 2026 NOFO: Award Information (See Sec. I of the NOFO)

- **Estimated funding:** DOE anticipates that, subject to the availability of future year appropriations, a total of up to **\$352 million** in current and future fiscal year funds will be used to support awards under this of which up to **\$88 million** will be available annually.
- **Period of performance:** Four years
- **Maximum/minimum award size:**
  - **\$3,000,000 to \$4,500,000** per award per year. **Average award size** is expected to be **\$4,000,000** per award per year after the first year of operations.
  - For new applications, recognizing that **new centers** take some time to ramp up full operations, DOE will likely **award less funding in Year 1** of the four-year project period than in subsequent years.

# Energy Frontier Research Center FY 2026 NOFO: Pre-applications (See Sec. IV.A.2 of the NOFO) – Page 1

- Pre-applications are **required**, with a limit of **3 per lead institution** and **1 per Director**
- The director must be in a permanent or indefinitely extensible position at the applicant institution. University directors must be tenured at time of application.
- Pre-applications may only be submitted by a user at the PI's institution with the "Submit to DOE" privilege in PAMS.
- SC may evaluate all or some portion of pre-applications to determine their competitiveness within a scientific topic. Any such review will be conducted by no fewer than three subject matter experts under the direction of Federal program managers chosen for their topical knowledge and breadth of perspective.
- Any review will be based on the following criteria:
  1. Responsiveness to the objectives of the NOFO as stated in Section III.
  2. Scientific and technical merit.
  3. Appropriateness of the proposed research approaches.
  4. Likelihood of scientific impact.

# Energy Frontier Research Center FY 2026 NOFO: Pre-applications (See Sec. IV.A.2 of the NOFO) – Page 2

- Reviews within a topical field will be a comparative review with priority given to scientifically innovative and forward-looking basic research with the highest likelihood of success as an application.
- Applicants with the highest rated pre-applications will be encouraged to submit applications; Applications that have not been encouraged by DOE will be declined without merit review.
- Feedback about pre-applications will be provided upon request **after award selections** have been announced.

# Energy Frontier Research Center FY 2026 NOFO: Key Dates

- Pre-application due date: April 1, 2026, by 5:00PM Eastern Time
  - Pre-applications must be submitted via the DOE Portfolio Analysis and Management System (PAMS)
- Pre-application response date: May 6, 2026
  - DOE will notify all pre-applicants about if they are encouraged to submit an application
- Application due date: July 1, 2026, by 11:59PM Eastern Time
  - Applications that have not been encouraged by DOE will be declined without merit review
  - Applications must be submitted via [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov)
- DOE anticipates that award selection will be completed by the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of Fiscal Year 2026 (July - Sept) and that awards will be made early in Fiscal Year 2027

# Checklist for avoiding common errors: Pre-applications

(not a comprehensive list of all NOFO requirements)

- **Scope:** For BES Report Topics, address **priority research directions/opportunities** in BES reports; For Special Topics, address the **requirements in the NOFO**; no applied research or technology development
- **Tables:** NOFO requires a table of “individuals who should not serve as reviewers” with the pre-application (guidance and template link are in Section IX.B.10 of the NOFO). You must submit the table as a separate file, preferably in Excel format. **Pre-applications without this table will be discouraged without review.** Applicants should also attach the science topics spreadsheet.
- **Science:** Should contain a clear and concise statement of the mission, scientific goals, and at least one scientific hypothesis or question motivating the proposed work
- Pre-applications are limited to **five pages**
- Each pre-application must designate a **single EFRC Director**
- Submit pre-application **via PAMS**, not via [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) (due April 1 by 5pm ET)
- **Late submissions** of pre-applications are rarely accepted (see Sec. V.D.4 of the NOFO)

# Checklist for avoiding common errors: Applications

(not a comprehensive list of all NOFO requirements)

- **Tables:** NOFO requires two tables with application attached to field 12 of the SF-424 Research and Related Other Project Information form. Applications without these two tables may be declined without review:
  1. List of Individuals Who Should Not Serve as Reviewers (NOFO p. 73)
  2. Summary budget (NOFO p. 23)
- **Budget:** The lead institution requests more funding from DOE than any other team member for each 12-month budget period. Note that we make awards to institutions, not Directors.
- **Biographical sketch** and list of **current/pending support**
  - Required for each senior/key personnel; follow instructions in NOFO, including the use of [SciENcv \(Science Experts Network Curriculum\)](#); ensure complete list of activities regardless of source of funding
- EFRC Director from the pre-application should not be changed unless unavoidable
- Data Management and Sharing Plan
- Submit application via [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov), not via PAMS (due July 1 by 11:59pm ET)
- **Late submissions** of applications are rarely accepted (see Sec. V.D.4 of the NOFO)

# Data Management and Sharing Plans

- **What:** New Data Management and Sharing Plan (DMSP) requirements for sharing digital scientific data went into effect for new solicitations on 10/1/2025.
- **Scientific Data Management Principles:** Increase pace of scientific discovery; Protect integrity, Enhance value of science; Maximize appropriate data sharing
- **DMSP Requirements:** Validation and replication of results; Timely and fair access; Data repository selection; Data management and sharing resources; Data sharing limitations
- **Reporting:** Publicly shared data must be reported to Office of Scientific and Technical Information (OSTI)

Data Management Plan (previous)		Data Management and Sharing Plan (FY 26)
• Scope is “Research Data” to validate research findings	➔	• Scope is “Scientific Data” to validate and replicate research findings
• Data underlying publications should be made as accessible as possible	➔	• Data underlying publications should be made available at time of publication
• No explicit requirement regarding other research data	➔	• Timeline for sharing other scientific data is required
• No explicit requirement regarding repository selection	➔	• Repository selection should align with <u>NSTC Desirable Characteristics</u> guidance

See [DOE DMSP Guidance](#) and [SC DMSP Guidance](#) for details.



# Where to find more information

- **EFRC webpage:** <http://science.osti.gov/bes/efrc/>
  - Technical Summaries: <https://science.osti.gov/bes/efrc/History/Archives/Technical-Summaries>
  - PI Meetings: <https://science.osti.gov/bes/efrc/PI-Meetings>
- **BES Reports:** <https://science.osti.gov/bes/Community-Resources/Reports>
- **NOFO:** <https://science.osti.gov/bes/Funding-Opportunities>
- **EFRC good practices document:**  
<https://science.osti.gov/-/media/bes/efrc/pdf/history/other/EFRC-Ref---Good-Practices-2017-12-v2.pdf>
- This **webinar** is being recorded; slides and the recording will be posted on the NOFO page above
- **Questions about the NOFO** must be submitted to [EFRC@science.doe.gov](mailto:EFRC@science.doe.gov)

# Questions & Answers

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